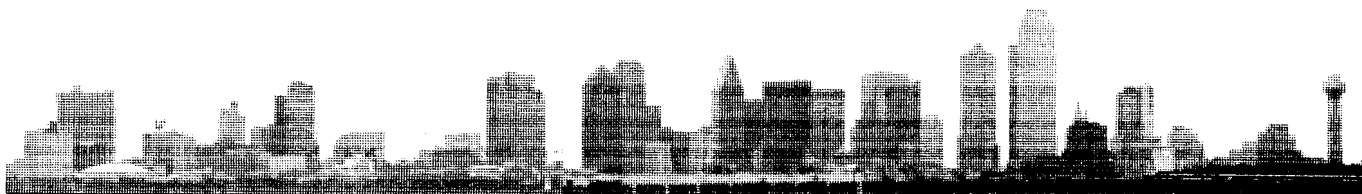


MICCC NEWS

Metroplex Commodore Computer Club



Fort Worth

Volume 13 Issue 10 — December 1995

Dallas

Amiga News

powerpc amigas on the way
os to be ported to chrp

November 15th 1995: The world should see the first PowerPC-based Amiga by the end of next year or the beginning of 1997, according to Petro Tyschtschenko, President of Amiga Technologies. But whether the first of the new generation machines — dubbed Power Amigas — will be straight Common Hardware Reference Platform clones is still an open question, as the Escom subsidiary debates the best way to maintain backwards compatibility with existing applications. An Escom spokesperson said the company is also in discussion with Motorola on the practicalities of building a variant of the PowerPC 604 processor that includes a 68000-family CISC core. This would ease Amiga's transition to the new RISC architecture. Whether such a hybrid chip can or will be built in time to satisfy Amiga Technologies' tight deadlines remains to be seen, so the company is also pursuing the software emulation path. The spokesperson acknowledged that Amiga is talking to Apple about using its 68k emulation technology, but said that it is also talking to alternative emulator software providers.

Running existing Amiga applications on a plain CHRP platform will be tough — the Amiga contains a number of proprietary support chips that the software expect to be present. In the first instance, therefore, it seems likely that the Power Amigas will be a superset of CHRP containing these extra chips. The first models will also have to incorporate Amiga's proprietary bus to allow the use of existing peripherals. However the spokesperson says that the intention is to wean application developers away from accessing the hardware directly; so that newer applications will be hardware independent.

Tyschtschenko says that his company intends to actively licence the Amiga OS version 4.1 to other

computer companies. The eventual aim is to have the shrink-wrapped OS available in the shops for users of CHRP machines to buy. He is clear that the Amiga's strength is in its software — though asked whether in a few years time Amiga Technologies will just be a software house, he answers frankly "I don't know. I don't have a crystal ball".

The PowerPC is just the first processor that the company intends to port the OS to, other RISCs will follow and though the company remains tight lipped about exactly which, sources say that the DEC Alpha is on the shopping list. The strategy is clear, Amiga Technologies believe that what the industry needs — and in particular what multimedia developers want — is a skinny, fast, multiprocessing operating system which won't steal too many of their precious processor cycles. In the age of OS-bloat it is worth remembering that the Amiga OS can run in 500K from a floppy drive. Amiga OS is set to get bigger. Converting it to RISC code, making it hardware independent and adding much-needed features such as real memory protection and networking support will cause some expansion. Nonetheless the company should still have a fast low-overhead system that it claims will run applications faster than the competition — important in the Amiga's heartland desktop video market. And yes Tyschtschenko said that he did have discussions with the people at Be Inc, but in the end, the need to retain compatibility with existing applications proved too important.

As for what clinched it for PowerPC, the Amiga spokesperson said that quite simply that it was the level of support that Motorola in particular was able to offer the company. ✓

News

new amiga distributor and
service provider named

The Service Management Group, Inc. (SMG of Columbia), MD has been chosen by Amiga Technologies GmbH, a subsidiary of ESCOM AG; of Bensheim, Germany, to distribute the Amiga product line in North America. This distribution Agreement covers the United States of America and Canada.

SMG has been associated with Commodore Business Machines, its distributors, dealers and customers since 1990. Amiga Technologies was looking for a company that had competencies in service and support and could be more than just a distributor. SMG fulfilled those requirements and will bring back the popular Amiga Computers to the North American dealers and users.

Together with SMG Amiga Technologies GmbH will be represented at the Video Toaster Expo from the 1st to the 4th of November in Los Angeles. A press conference will be held on the 2nd of November. During the press conference Petro Tyschtschenko, Managing Director of Amiga Technologies, will reveal the name of the new processor that will be used in the next generation Amigas.

The Amiga 4000T will hit the shelves the second week of November.

Amiga Technologies will also have a booth at Comdex in Las Vegas from the 13th to the 17th of November 1995. The SMG will represent Amiga Technologies at the World of Amiga in Toronto, Canada in December.

The Service Management Group has been a leader in Outsourcing Distribution and Warranty Administration for high technology manufacturers since 1989.

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Warning!

beware of Copperhead
by Bill Raecke

Back on October 12, I ordered a 2091 SCSI controller with 7.x ROMs from Copperhead Technologies. It turned out to be a mistake. To prevent others from following in my footsteps, I thought I'd share my experiences with you.

I really didn't need a 2091 controller to begin with. What I needed were the newer 7.x ROMs since the 6.6 ROMs that I currently have on my 2091 don't work properly with my 68040 accelerator. But Copperhead was selling 2091 controllers with 7.x ROMs for \$49 so I figured why not get the whole thing. My first shock occurred while I was still on the phone. It turned out that the actual price was \$63.50 by the time shipping and handling were added — a bit excessive and well above the normal for shipping and handling. Still, I decided to go ahead.

My 2091 arrived on October 20, just about on schedule. Problem was, it didn't have 7.x ROMs on board — it had 6.1 ROMs. Since I already have a 2091 controller with 6.6 ROMs this one was of no use to me at all. I got on the phone the next working day, October 23. The person I talked to was apologetic and said that if I returned the 6.1 ROMs they would send the 7.x ROMs right away. I got the ROMs and the check in the mail the next day...and then I just waited...and waited.

I waited until November 15, in fact. This was two weeks after the check cleared my bank and allowed sufficient time for the ROMs to arrive by pack mule. On November 15 I called. After explaining my situation I was put on hold while they checked. I was mysteriously disconnected. So I called back later and went through my story again. This time I was told that the replacement ROMs had been sent out on October 24 — the same day I returned my ROMs. I was assured that they would send another set immediately and institute a trace through UPS. I waited some more.

This time I waited until November 24. Normal UPS shipping would have gotten it here on the 21st — four working days. I called and once again was put on hold and mysteriously disconnected. I called back, got an answering machine and once more told my story. I asked that I be called back but, of course, I never heard a word.

Today's date is November 28. It's been almost seven weeks since I ordered the controller...and I have given up waiting. I have to assume at this point that the people at Copperhead Technologies have no intention of making good on my purchase. If it turns out that I eventually get my ROMs, I'll let you know in a future article. In the meantime I would strongly suggest that if you need to order anything at all, stay far, far away from Copperhead Technologies. They are still advertising on the inside back cover of *Amazing Computing* and so they still pose a threat to honest Amiga users.

The Internet

an overview

by Rick Bilonick — Pittsburgh Commodore Group

What Is The Internet?

The term "Internet" refers to a worldwide network of several million computers and the information contained on this network. The network originated because of the need for researchers at academic and military institutions to share data and information. Although in part originally supported by the U.S. Federal government, today the federal government provides very little direct funding.

Why Should You Be Interested In The Internet?

If you need easy and fast access to information, the Internet is an incredible resource. The information can be in the form of magazine type articles, research papers, public domain computer software for virtually any computer platform, demos of commercial software, help learning a foreign language, product information direct from the manufacturer or vendor, product support (especially for computer related products), world-wide electronic mail (e-mail), access to and use of large computers anywhere in the world, live interactive communication (written, audio, and video), and so forth.

Why Has The Internet Been In The News Lately?

The Internet has been in the middle of a controversy in the last several months, mostly due to ignorance and political opportunism. It started about a year ago. Being a statistician, I attended a local chapter meeting of the American Statistical Association held at the University of Pittsburgh. The title of that talk was something like "Pornography on the Internet" and was to be a presentation of the results of a Carnegie Mellon University study. As it turned out, most of the results were not presented because a related paper had just been accepted for publication and the usual practice is to not publicly present results before publication. However, enough was presented to get a good idea of what the study actually consisted. As I remember the presentation, the study mostly concerned a statistical study of pornographic computerized pictures archived on commercial bulletin board systems (BBS's) and had very little to say about the Internet which is primarily noncommercial. Several months later when the paper was published, the headlines screamed about all the pornography on the Internet. The results of the study were grossly distorted in the U.S. Congress, with one Congressman reporting that 85% of the Internet was pornographic.

While I guess one cannot expect politicians to refrain from lying and distorting the truth to get re-elected or to help get censorship laws passed, one should expect more of the media. However, the media just helped sensationalize all the distortions and lies.

While no one would assert that there is no pornography on the Internet, the actual amount is probably less than one and a half percent (1.5%). (That there is more than one way to measure content on the Internet; and that, in my opinion, everyone has the right to unfettered freedom to information in whatever form is beyond the scope of this article.)

The immense amount of information contained on the Internet should be reason enough for wanting access. You can easily avoid anything you find objectionable (like politicians).

Examples of Internet Usage

If you are looking for Amiga public domain software, you can literally find just about everything that is available including the latest programs. In fact, there is public domain software on the Internet for just about every computer.

Other Examples Include:

- A loved one seems depressed and you want information on the symptoms of clinical depression. And you want the information NOW.
- You want to find a recipe for tonight's dinner.
- You want the latest information on a current or previous space shuttle flight.
- You want the latest weather information along with satellite photos.
- You're having problems with a certain piece of software and you need technical support (without having to pay for it).
- You want to immediately send messages to a friend in Paris without having to pay for long distance telephone charges or wait for mail delivery.
- You are learning a foreign language and you are looking for texts to practice reading, help with grammatical construction, practice tests, sound clips of words and phrases, or actual written conversation with native speakers.
- You realize that the commercial media is very selective about what it reports. Even National Public Radio can only cover a finite number of news topics. Many organizations on the Internet provide late breaking news on a tremendous number of topics.
- You want to present your own collection of information to others. There is no reason you can't set up your own "page" on the Internet.

If you can describe it, it probably already exists on the Internet.

What Elements Make Up The Internet?

The Internet is a catch-all phrase for the entire computer network. The Internet consists of various parts. The "World Wide Web" (WWW) consists of "pages" which contain information including text, graphics, files and links to other pages. The WWW may be the most interesting part of the Internet, especially if you "browse" it with a graphical browser that gives you access with the click of a mouse. AMosaic (Amiga Mosaic) is a graphical browser for the Amiga. "Lynx" is a non-graphical text-based WWW browser.

"Electronic Mail" (e-mail) allows you to send messages to anyone with an e-mail address. The transmission of the messages is virtually instantaneous to anywhere in the world. Each e-mail address is unique and is automatically routed from the sender to its destination address. If the person is on-line when you send the message the reply could be immediate. If not, the sent message is saved until they retrieve their mail.

"Internet Relay Chat" (IRC) is available for those who want to interactively "chat" with others on specific topics. IRC servers provide hundreds of channels, each devoted to a different topic.

"File Transfer Protocol" (FTP) (which existed before the WWW) allows you to download all sorts of public domain computer programs, data files, pictures, etc.

Thousands of news groups exist, each of which focuses on a particular topic. Messages can be posted to a news group. For example, comp.sys.amiga provides a place to discuss all things Amiga. This is similar to IRC in that discussions can be held, however, it is more organized and more similar to a physical bulletin board with messages posted. The messages could be requests for help or information on a particular topic and may be available for several weeks. IRC is more interactive and

the information is more transient, lasting for only several minutes.

"Telenet" allows you to access remote computers connected to the Internet. For example, you could actually run programs on a computer, say in Japan, with just a local telephone call.

Graphical browsers similar to those for WWW exist for FTP, e-mail, IRC, Telenet, and newsgroups.

How Do You Access The Internet?

There are numerous ways to access the Internet. If you have an account on Compuserve or GENie (or other electronic service), you already have some access (although maybe quite limited) to the Internet. For example, GENie allows you to send and receive e-mail. You should check with your electronic service for details. You may also have Internet access at your workplace. From my experience, this can be a very expensive way to access the Internet.

What do you do if you don't have Internet access where you work, you don't have an electronic service like GENie, and you don't want to spend a fortune? There is a growing list of Internet service providers (ISP's). Two local ISP's that I'm familiar with are USA Onramp and Telerama. USA Onramp is physically located downtown in the Fulton Building while Telerama is located on Mount Washington. They both provide Internet service at a flat rate. Telerama charges \$20 per month for service (which includes up to three hours of SLIP/PPP access per day — needed for using a graphical browser). USA Onramp charges \$30 per month for unlimited SLIP/PPP access. Telerama allows both text-based access and graphical interfaces, while USA Onramp requires graphical interfaces for all functions. ✓

METCOM '95



METCOM 95 was a success. We had more people attending than we have members in the MCCC. That's a record-breaking showing. The picture above shows activity at the always-popular flea market.

Amiga Library News

public domain and shareware picks
from Bill Raecke

PageStream 3.0ha by Soft-Logik

This is the latest update from Soft-Logik. Everything isn't working yet, but this is a lot closer than any of the preceding versions have been. The list of things that don't work is shrinking to the point where the product can actually be used for some projects. If you have *PageStream 3.0*, you'll want to upgrade it. Look for the patch on MCCC-A_956 and 957. It's distributed as two archived files due to the size of the patch.

term 4.5 by Olaf Barthel

By any measure, *term* is one of the best terminal packages available for the Amiga. By my measure it is the best. Version 4.5 has a lot of bug fixes (none of which ever gave me problems to begin with) and a lot of changes to the look of things. A "file folder" look has been incorporated to replace cycle gadgets in many requesters. A word of caution, however. Some users have reported problems downloading files with the this version. I haven't had any problems myself and so I can't really say what the problem is — but if this version doesn't work right for you, there's always version 4.4 to fall back on.

term is a big program. It is distributed in archived format over multiple disks because of its size. The good news is that you don't need all the pieces — just get the parts you need. On MCCC-A_963 are the docs in DVI format, some extras (sounds, ARexx scripts, etc.), and the Locale files for those in the club who would like to operate in Danish, Dutch, German, French, Spanish, Italian or Swedish. MCCC-A_964 contains the standard documentation and the main distribution for 68030 or greater processors. The libraries and the main distribution for 68020 or lower processors can be found on MCCC-A_965, and MCCC-A_966 contains the documentation in Postscript format. Enjoy.

Setpatch 40.16 by ESCOM AG

Our first software contribution from ESCOM appears on this month's disks. This latest version of Setpatch is intended for Workbench versions 2.1 through 3.1. Run the install program and it will update your system if you need it. Everyone needs this one. You'll find it on MCCC-A_967.

HDEnv by Michael Fedrowitz

If you are short on memory (and who isn't?) and you have a hard drive (and who doesn't) this program may be just what you're looking for. As you may or may not know, every time you boot your computer a device called ENV: is created in your RAM: disk and all files in ENVARC: are copied to it. This allows you to temporarily change your system settings (stored in ENV:) without

affecting the normal, default settings (stored in ENVARC:). Problem is, more and more programs are keeping information in ENVARC: nowadays (as they are supposed to do according to standards) which can use up a lot of valuable RAM in your computer. In my system the ENV: device currently occupies about 200K of valuable memory. *HDEnv* offers an alternative. You simply create the ENV: device on your hard drive instead, copy all the ENVARC: files to it, and then modify your startup sequence to stop creating the ENV: device and copying everything to it. Instead, you insert the *HDEnv* command which compares ENV: to ENVARC: and either copies new files into ENV: or deletes files from ENV: as required. The result is a startup which is somewhat faster and a computer with extra memory available for other things. *HDEnv* is on MCCC-A_969.

Virus Checker 8.3 by John Veldthuis

I don't need to say anything more about this, do I? *Virus Checker* is the most popular virus protection utility around. It checks for link viruses as well as boot-block viruses. And this is the latest version. It's on MCCC-A_967.

FastIPrefs by H.W. Schober

FastIPrefs is a replacement for the Amiga standard IPrefs which controls your system preferences. Replacing IPrefs is a bit scary, but I've been using this for about a week now with no problems. It's intended for Workbench 3.1. Improvements include faster background brush loading, locking of colors 4 through 7 on Workbench (for Magic Workbench colors), and even the ability to use JPEG pics as backgrounds (although this tends to take forever). Check it out on MCCC-A_969.

ScreenClock by Thomas Igracki

I finally found a clock I like as well as the memclock I wrote myself years ago. This is the one I'm running now. The date and time are configurable. The optional free memory display can display Chip, Fast or Total Free memory. The clock automatically attaches to the titlebar of the Workbench on startup *and then moves to whatever screen is the topmost screen*. It automatically displays using the correct colors and font of the screen it is using for its display. You can set it not to display on certain screens if you like — or you can set it to stick to Workbench only — but it seems to work without problems on all screens in my system. The best part is that it looks as if it belongs as part of the system. I recommend this one very highly. You can find it this month on MCCC-A_969.

ASIMWare CDFS 3.0

the premiere cd-rom file system

by Mark Gilmore, Northwest Amiga Group

Well, it finally came, the very long-awaited ASIMWare CDFS 3.0 (a CD-ROM file system for the Amiga). There were a lot of new features added and it was worth the wait. I couldn't wait to get the disk on my 2000.

As I opened the package, I inserted the disk into DF0: and then looked at the manual for details on how to install the new software...*Not!* Yep, I just stuck the disk in the drive and double clicked "Install-CDFS3.0" and away it went.

I picked "Expert User" as my prefs for Commodore's Installer program. It was a painless process. They spent a lot of time configuring the install program for the expert user pref. The installer program asked about every aspect of the installation and if it was OK with me! I like this because, as many of us know, sometimes developers will do stuff like overwrite a newer, updated file and leave you with an older one. What's worse, they won't even tell ya.

Well, let's look at the new features over 2.0. First is when you stick a CD-ROM into your drive, a requester will pop up and ask which file system would you like to use. I find this very useful for CD-ROMs that have more than one file system, such as those with IBM and Mac files on the same disk. Not only that, if you pick a Mac format, there is a button for which resource fork you want: MacBinary, Resource, or Data. This is a real gem for those of us with data on Mac formatted CD-ROMs. The next feature I noticed was that I could finally look at Photo CDs without having to load three programs. They worked it out so all you do is point and click. If you have a Photo CD in your drive, just double click the disk icon. Then open the drawer with the size pictures you want and voila! There is a thumbnail picture of all the pictures on your Photo CD disk. I then double click on any of the thumbnails and it is shown as an Amiga picture on the screen. This didn't work for me in 2.0. I'm glad it does now.

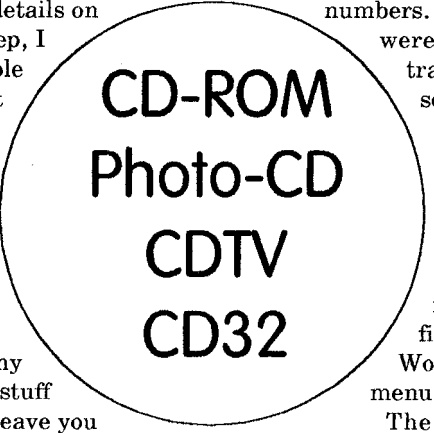
One of the things that really impressed me was the emulation of CD32 and CDTV. After selecting prefs, then selecting "autoboot CD32/CDTV titles", I was able to boot from CD32 and CDTV disks. Not only that, they worked! I was able to boot from CD32 gamer's disks and actually run the games on my 2000. Wow! Almost all of the games were playable. There were a couple I couldn't play. Probably some AGA specific stuff. Other than that it was really sweet. It has read and performed all of the emulations that I was able to throw at it except for CDXL stuff. I have had several conversations with ASIM on this

and we feel it has something to do with my Derringer board, but they are on it.

The next item was a little discouraging. I was not able to get all of ASIMTunes to work right. Although I was able to play an audio CD using the play button, the numbers in the different windows would have strange numbers. Like I was playing track 40 when there were only eight tracks on the disk and the track length was -46:03 minutes. There is some work to be done. This seems to be a problem that I alone have since no one else has reported it to ASIMWare. I have found that the PD version of AmiCD-ROM's Jukebox still works, so I'll use it until they get this bug fixed. I think that being able to rename the icons for each audio CD-ROM disk and file is a really neat feature. Just used the Workbench's Rename from the pulldown menu.

The only feature I was not able to get to function was the ability to have CD-FS read 16-bit audio CDs and play them through the Amiga's 8-bit audio jacks. I was looking forward to being able to use this feature for digitizing some of my audio effects CDs. Again, so far, I am the only one with this problem.

The last thing that has sold me is the fact that while ASIM was late releasing the product, they have worked very hard trying to get my version to work with my computer. I say "two thumbs up" for the technical support group at ASIMWare. All and all, I am impressed with the product and recommend it to anybody with an Amiga and a CD-ROM. ✓



CD-ROM
Photo-CD
CDTV
CD32

amiga library news from page 5

BlueEyes by Smile Soft

Here's an absolutely useless program — but one I found I couldn't resist anyway. I have it installed on my system right now. When I look up at the titlebar of my Workbench, I see a couple of eyes, just to the left of my ScreenClock, watching my mouse pointer's every move. Every once in a while the eyes blink — and if I don't move my pointer for a while, they nod off to sleep. And every once in a while I can't help but chuckle to myself. *BlueEyes* is the program responsible. It's small and it uses very little CPU power. The location is configurable as is the length of time between blinks and the length of time before going to sleep. You owe it to yourself to check this one out. It's on MCCC-A_970. ✓

Emplant

ibm on the amiga

by Kevin Breen, NOCK

You've probably seen the ads in the back of Amiga magazines for the EMPLANT e586DX emulator — "PC Emulation can be FAST!", "Microsoft Windows on your Amiga!", even "the fastest PC emulator for the Amiga!". Sounds great, and since I already owned the EMPLANT board and the MAC emulation, I thought I'd try it. For around \$90, I'd have an IBM in my Amiga, right? Well, yes and no!

The EMPLANT emulations are a two part system: (1) hardware — a Zorro II card that fits in your Amiga with optional SCSI and Mac serial ports, and (2) software, with different programs that allow the emulation of Macintosh or IBM computer systems. Your system must have a 68020 or better processor, but an MMU (Memory Management Unit) is not required. The user must also supply the Mac ROM or IBM BIOS chips (or ROM image — EMPLANT emulations require you to dump the ROM information to a disk anyway, before use, so you only need the hardware chips for legal purposes). You also need Mac or IBM system software.

The Mac emulation worked well and so I was expecting great things from the IBM version. Mike Simoneaux (former NOCK Amiga Group President) and I got it up and running at the March meeting. We tested it with AMI and Microsoft diagnostics and they showed a 486DX with math coprocessor that passed all of the standard tests and emulated VGA, CGA, and EGA graphics (within the limitations of the A2000 it was installed in, i.e. 16 colors max — but you can get SVGA/256 colors on AGA machines). It showed a processor speed of up to 16MHz, depending on the test — not lightning fast on a 68040/33MHz machine, but much faster than PC Task, the other IBM emulator for the Amiga. Utilities Unlimited, EMPLANT's makers, estimate the actual speed to be about 6MHz average, but claim some operations on the emulator actually run faster than on a 66MHz Pentium system. Users running Windows say it runs well, but very slowly. Windows 95 may change that. Under DOS it works well too, but certain operations, like unZIPing files, can run very slowly (it took almost 9 hours to decompress 3 HD game disks for a flight simulator game). Utilities Unlimited has updated the IBM emulation software 3 times since I first bought it (they offer free software updates from their BBS) and each update has brought speed improvements. It's impressive considering there's no IBM/Intel hardware (x86) involved, but don't plan on running 3D Studio on it anytime soon.

And there are some other problems. The emulation is supposed to support a mouse (PC Bus type) but my software has never been able to find it. There is also no serial port support, even if you have the dual serial options on your EMPLANT hardware, although the

manual would lead you to believe there is (as does the EMPLANT advertisement, although a serial port is never mentioned). A parallel port was added in version 2.1 of the software and uses the Amiga parallel port. I haven't been able to get the emulator to recognize IBM hard drive files with later versions of the EMPLANT software. They worked well with versions 1.0 and 1.1, but anything later can't find them and FDISK returns a "software error/divide by zero". This seems to be a common problem, with lots of postings to their BBS about it.

There also is a problem with the emulation causing hard disk errors if the emulation locks up and you try a warm reboot of the Amiga. A command stored by the emulation in the Amiga's T directory saves Mac and IBM CMOS information to a small file on your hard disk and you'll get a "Read/write error — disk not validated" message. I reformatted and reloaded my hard drive several times (lots of work!) before I discovered all I needed to do was rewrite the Rigid Disk Block info to the drive, not reformat the whole thing.

Major bugs in my book, but apparently they only happen on some systems, since many posts to the BBS say the emulation works fine on their Amigas. Utilities Unlimited tech support is difficult, if not impossible, to reach and they seem to rarely answer questions posted on the BBS. The company does seem very concerned about improving their software and fixing the bugs, though. Version 2.2 of the IBM software is to be released soon and that may fix the problems. (Mac version 5.4 will also be released soon).

If you already have an EMPLANT board and need to run IBM software that doesn't require extreme speed or a serial port, the IBM emulation may be for you. But if you want to do 3D rendering, Windows, or Net surfing, you'll probably be better off with a real IBM or clone for now. ✍

*Thought For
The Month*

*What do you call
parachuting lawyers?
Skeet!*

Time Bomb

warning to 3000/4000 owners

from by Hal Greenlee — Springfield Premier User Group

Your motherboard contains a time bomb which will kill it if you do not act in time, and that time is already past for early production 3000s.

If you have not already done so, it is very important that you change the NICAD battery to be found on the left side of the motherboard. I have observed on almost all of the 3000 desktop boards I have recently inspected, working or not, that this battery is leaking corrosive salts onto the surrounding components and board. By the time your computer fails (and it WILL fail), so much damage is likely to have occurred that repair will be extensive, if not even impractical. Why? Well, it would be bad enough if it were only the nearby components that were being eaten up, but this crud also follows the battery and component leads down into the interior of the board. Typical problems include failure of the scan doubler and other

video circuitry, and erratic booting. Anything within a couple of inches of the leaking parts of the battery can be affected.

I strongly advise you not to wait for your machine to start acting up, or until gross corrosion is visible. If you own a 3000, replace the battery NOW. This battery should be changed on any board more than two years old. The problem is already showing up on early 4000s.

The battery is a barrel-shaped object about 0.6" diameter and 0.8" long, with blue or red plastic covering. They are 3.6v, 60MAH, made by Varta, GP and others. The service manual gives the mfg. part number as BT190. Revision D 4000 boards (not many around) don't use this battery, having a chrome disk-shaped lithium battery instead. These batteries can be obtained from many distributors of computer parts. Don't take a chance, do it!

Two Spreadsheets

a brief comparison by Glen Miller, Editor — Amiga News Toronto

Turbo Calc 3.5

This is the spreadsheet program that Escom will be releasing with every Amiga that it sells.

It reminds me of a program released in 1992 by a company named Gold Disk. The program was called Procalc. It reminds me of it so much, it's scary. With Procalc, my machine would crash creating pie charts, the same thing happened with TurboCalc. It's not just that though, the layout (GUI) of the programs is too similar. You could compare the two side by side, and with a quick glance, think they are one and the same.

How does it rate? Well, I hope Escom doesn't expect it to bowl users over, because it's not a Lotus 1-2-3 or MS Excel. As a home user spreadsheet, it's not bad. It offers a large variety of 2 and 3 dimensional graphs, which are very customizable.

Unfortunately, it's a little unstable on my machine, and that is it's major fault, Escom should have made the author fix his bugs before releasing it with their hardware.

Other nice features are it's ability to export graphs to IFF graphic files so your charts can be loaded into DTP programs and word processors (like Final Writer).

If you need a run-of-the-mill spreadsheet, TurboCalc will fill your needs. It has it's problems, and I hope a free upgrade will be available soon.

Tested on: Amiga 3000, 2MB Chip, 8MB Fast, KS

3.1

FinalCalc 1.0

Now THIS is a spreadsheet program! The folks at Softwood (the creators of Final Writer) have created yet another killer application to add to their already impressive line up.

This program excels in areas that TurboCalc 3.5 does not. First, it's options are enormous! Every section of the program is fully customizable! A created chart can be rotated on ANY of the three axis to create a true 3D effect.

It can also export charts to .IFF format (like TurboCalc 3.5), so it also allows easy importing into other applications.

Like all other Softwood programs, it's dead easy to use. I didn't even open the manual and I had no trouble figuring out how to use the program.

Softwood also took the time to produce both integer and FPU versions of the software, meaning, if you have an Amiga with a math co-processor, you can take advantage of the FPU version. It will be faster and will put less load on your main CPU.

If you need a spreadsheet program, you can't go wrong with FinalCalc! Don't be scared of it being version 1.0, it is perfectly stable (unlike TurboCalc). It makes me wonder why Escom didn't license the Softwood products which seem more professional and reliable than the products being bundled with Amigas.

Tested on: Amiga 3000, 2MB Chip, 8MB Fast, KS

3.1 ✓

CHAPTER NEWS

Amiga North Dallas

Michael Turner

With the advent of palm-sized video recorders and the incredible things being done with computer graphics, it has always amazed me how the Amiga and the Video Toaster are so much neglected by the general public. In any case, our last two meetings had some pretty good demonstrations of the Amiga's great video capabilities.

In our October meeting, our presenter was Brett Hester, who formerly worked at Amazing Computing and is now running his own company, Hester and Associates. Brett demonstrated "Plug-In-And-Go," a series of macros written in ARexx for use with Lightwave-3D. "Plug-In-And-Go" was designed to take out a lot of the tedium and drudgery of rendering objects and animation in Lightwave. Brett began his talk with some of the problems he encountered with NewTek's early GUI's and file requesters. These problems caused him to start writing the macros which eventually became Plug-In-And-Go. There are 53 macros which load easily into Lightwave as menu and sub-menu commands. There are commands to rotate objects, change directions, create lighting and special effects and manipulate text. Brett even included commands to create your own macros and also chain macros together. The macros are in uncompiled text form so that the user can modify and customize the macros in any way he might wish. The program also gives information on each macro and its parameters and remembers all earlier settings. All of this takes less than 800K to load. For anyone interested, Brett can be contacted on the Internet at behester@iadfw.net (<http://www.airmail.net/~behester/index.html>).

Our November meeting was

held at Dan Stockelman's house in Plano. Our presenter was Joe Dwyer. Joe demonstrated his NewTek Video Toaster connected to his A4000. Joe started out by showing a video demonstrating some of the Toaster's video special effects. He then showed us some of the video work he has done. Joe told us that his video work started out as a hobby and now he has paid for all his equipment and even made a little money. Our presenter also went through many of the fades, wipes, and special effects that the Toaster can produce. He explained what the Toaster can do (a lot!) and what it could not do. Just about anything that you can think of in video the Amiga can do! One member mentioned that the series *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Babylon V* both used the Toaster to generate their special effects. After the demonstration, Joe invited anyone who wanted to come up and give the Toaster a try. Thanks to both our presenters for their excellent demonstrations.

As to News and Rumors, both meetings brought up several. Some of the most interesting...

- Around \$2300 worth of stuff was bought and sold at this year's Metcom.
- Eddie stopped by Metropolitan Computing and they mentioned that the A4000Ts are shipping and are priced around \$2700. However, they have to order in sets of five.
- Another member mentioned that the price may drop to around \$1400-1600 in the near future.
- Escom is getting rid of the last of the old line of monitors. The new monitors will be 15 inch screens at the minimum.
- Rumors of a 68040 Amiga with Macintosh compatibility.

Also, elections for officers are being held in December and we are

still looking for a VP. If any one is interested please contact Eddie Corr. Our next meeting is being held on the third TUESDAY of December, which will be the 19th. Because the Community Room becomes the mall's gift wrapping center during the holidays, we will again be meeting at Dan Stockelman's house in Plano for our December meeting. The address is 3509 Claymore Dr. Plano, TX. (Mapsco p.657u — 1995 Edition). Thanks need to go out to Dan for allowing us to use his house as a meeting place while the mall wraps their Christmas gifts. Last but not least, our December meeting is our annual Christmas party so bring some munchies and some soft-drinks and your favorite game on your favorite Amiga! See You There!

Metro C64/128

Brenda Sessums

Greetings Metro C-64/128 Users! We had 12 fabulous people come to the November meeting.

The second chapter-produced newsletter was handed out at the meeting, and met with much success. PLEASE, if you have any item you would like to see in the newsletter, then let Brenda or Mike Sessums know. Also, if you would like to write a column, there is space available. And, as we said at the meeting, Commodore Country has been welcomed aboard to underwrite the newsletter, so our chapter will not have any cash outlay. The chapter newsletter is will be available (as long as Brenda and Mike can produce it) on the MCCC News "flyer" months.

Well, the first thing we did was vote on the Board of Directors officers. Everyone agreed that the presented slate of officers were great, and were passed unanimously. Now, next month, we will vote on chapter officers. We still need someone to fill the Vice President spot, and if there

CHAPTER NEWS

is any post you would like to volunteer for, PLEASE speak up at the next meeting. After all, we can't have only three people be the entire chapter officers. After all, it takes a quorum (that's four) of officers to make decisions. It's not official with only three pretending to be five!

Good news! Jack Tarvin gave us the scoop on Phil Heberer's Internet address. Here it is: <phil.heberer@tlct.com>. (Don't use the brackets.) This news is helping us cut our phone bill down, for sure!

Jack Tarvin and Mary Louise Hagemeyer requested we have a future meeting on using the Commodore for genealogy. We could also give some help on genealogy in general, such as how to gather facts and where to do your research. Brenda Sessums has ordered two genealogy programs to try out for the meeting: Gennie 2 (from Salt Lake City) and Per-former (a form maker with genealogy templates). Brenda says that these show great promise. If anyone else knows of a genealogy program for the C-64 or 128, please let Brenda know.

Here is a little known fact about GEOS 128. Two printer drivers — Epson and CITH — will do 50% and 66% reduction respectively. This can allow you to make flyers and Day-Runner(R) size pages.

Commodore country is looking for a copy of *Rail West* by SSI. Their number is (817) 295-7658. Also, does anyone know what a KIM is? What we do know is that it is a huge piece of hardware, about the size of a 128. But what does it do?

The Gatekeeper is a bi-monthly magazine running opposite months of the *underground*. Subscription is \$12 per year. Contact Brian Pease, *The Gatekeeper*, 610 1st St., Liverpool, NY 13088.

Well, that's all for now. Don't forget the Christmas party-meeting in December. Bring any goodies you would like to share.

Membership Notice

These memberships expired
at the end of November

Alan R. Gilchrist
Roger M. Kromer
Samuel L. Owens, Sr.
Jody Reimers
Ben Wilcox

These memberships will expire
at the end of December

Davis Chauviere
Ben Clingerman
Jason Cromwell
Marc Ellett
Charles H. Haymes
Jerry Hicks
Hershel Hoover
Clyde Masey
Gregg Moulton
Steven F. Nichols
Tony Parisi
Nick Phiripes
Fred E. Ramsey
Gus Reiter
Mark Renfro
Richard Schulz
Ted Schwarz
Rod Stasick
Carl Thornton
Bernard Varnau
Scott Walters
Jim Waters
Joe B. Wharton

The Fine Print

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Statement of Purpose: The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff: The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Meetings and Membership: Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are \$24 per year or \$15 for six months, and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC multi-user Bulletin Board System.

The MCCC News

Copyright Information: Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted or otherwise distributed by other user groups or by individuals who may find it helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

Advertising: The MCCC News accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (prepaid consecutive three months): Full Page — \$36 (\$96); Half Page — \$18 (\$48); Quarter Page — \$12 (\$32); Business Card — \$6 (\$16). Materials to be inserted will cost \$.08 per copy (duplication not included) and must be inserted into all newsletters for the month.

Articles: Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles may be submitted as ASCII text or in Amiga *excellence!*, *ProWrite*, *WordPerfect* or *Final Writer* format. They may be uploaded to the MCCC BBS, to StarText, or submitted on disk. If these methods are not possible, I will, as a last resort, accept printed articles. If graphics need to be included they may be submitted as IFF files, DR2D, *PageStream* or *Art Expressions* structured drawings, *Professional Draw* clips or, again as a last resort, printed output.

Deadline: The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is 7am of the fourth Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail c/o Bill Raecke, 2614 Charolais Way, Arlington, Texas 76017.

Extra Copies: Extra Copies of the MCCC News are available at \$1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded with the required fee by the regular newsletter deadline.

MCCC Board of Directors

President	David Owens	817-577-2304
Vice President	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825
Treasurer	John Malmstrom	817-282-6158
Secretary	Okley Moss	817-282-7751
Librarian	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825
(C64/128 help)	Joe Ostrokol	817-534-1990
Education Chair	Mike Sessums	817-238-9891
BBS Coordinator	Okley Moss	817-282-7751
Newsletter Editor	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
Past President	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825

MCCC BBS Numbers

(METRO 28,800 BAUD)	817-268-4191
(METRO 28,800 BAUD)	817-268-4196

MCCC Chapter Officers

Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter

President	David Owens	817-577-2304
Vice President	Wayne Brodnax	817-244-0828
Treasurer	Bruce Nelson	817-498-0899
Secretary	Johnny Kitchens	817-649-8632
Librarian	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825

Amiga North Dallas Chapter

President	Eddie Corr	214-423-1947
Vice President	Steve Nichols	214-530-6345
Treasurer	Don Sobieck	214-320-8951
Secretary	Michael Turner	214-216-9138
Librarian	John Cummings	214-618-5308

Metro C-64/128 Chapter

President	Mike Sessums	817-238-9891
Vice President	Jack Tarvin	817-292-5235
Treasurer	Jo Lynn Linville	817-783-2784
Secretary	Brenda Sessums	817-238-9891
Librarian	Jo Lynn Linville	817-783-2784

Normal Meeting Schedule

1st Tuesday	MCCC Board of Directors
2nd Tuesday	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
2nd Saturday	Metro C-64/128 Chapter
3rd Tuesday	Amiga North Dallas Chapter

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Dec 5 MCCC Board of Directors
7:30 pm — John Malmstrom's Place
437 Circleview Drive S, Hurst
- Dec 9 Metro C-64/128 Chapter
1:30 pm — UNT Health Sciences Building
Lancaster & Camp Bowie, Fort Worth
- Dec 12 Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm — N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
- Dec 19 Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm — Dan's Place
3509 Claymore Drive, Plano



Early Date —> January Newsletter Deadline — 7am, December 16

These Dealers offer discounts to MCCC members
Be sure to show your membership card

ANSOFT Data Systems

Amiga Software & Hardware
2801 W. 7th Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76107
(817) 870-2529

Commodore Country

C-64, C-128 & Amiga Software
1420 County Road 914
Burleson, Texas 76028
(817) 295-7658

Metropolitan Computer

Amiga Software, Hardware & Repair
4372 Spring Valley
Dallas, Texas 75244
(214) 702-9119

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